



February 13, 2007

H.Con.Res. 63 - Disapproving of the decision of the President announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq

Floor Situation

H.Con.Res. 63 is being considered on the floor under a closed. The rule:

- Provides for the following general debate in the House:
 - Not beyond midnight on Tuesday, February 13, 2007;
 - Not beyond midnight on Wednesday, February 14, 2007; and,
 - 12 hours beginning on Thursday, February 15, 2007
- All debate is equally divided and controlled by the Majority and Minority Leader or their designees and waives all points of order against consideration of the concurrent resolution.
- Provides that the Majority Leader at any time, after consultation with the Minority Leader, may extend debate time for an additional hour.
- Provides that, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone consideration of the concurrent resolution to a time designated by the Speaker.
- Contains one motion to recommit which may not contain instructions.

This legislation was introduced by Rep. Ike Skelton (D-MO) on February 12, 2007, and has not been considered by any committee in the 110th Congress.

H.Con.Res. 63 is expected to be considered on the floor on Tuesday and throughout the balance of the week.

Summary

H.Con.Res. 63 resolves that:

- Congress and the American People will continue to support and protect the members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and

honorably in Iraq; and,

- Congress disapproves of the decision of President George W. Bush announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.

Note: This is a non-binding resolution.

Background

The Global War on Terror

On September 11, 2001, al Qaeda unleashed horrific attacks upon the homeland of the United States, murdering 2,973 American civilians in New York City, Arlington, VA, and Shanksville, PA.

Unfortunately, the 9/11 attacks were not the first organized terrorist acts against the United States.

- In 1979, the American embassy in Tehran was taken over and 66 Americans were held hostage for 444 days.
- In 1983, the Marine Barracks in Beirut were bombed, killing 241 Marines.
- Al Qaeda's first attack on United States soil occurring on February 26, 1993. The terrorist organization detonated a car bomb under the World Trade Center, killing 6 Americans.
- Osama bin Laden declared a "Fatwah" against the United States in 1996.
- On August 7, 1998, Al Qaeda struck at 2 American embassies, killing 212 in Kenya and 11 in Tanzania.
- The USS Cole was attacked on October 12, 2000, in Yemen killing 17 U.S. soldiers.

Since the 9/11 attacks, militant Islamists have planned acts of terrorism around the world, attacking innocent people from county to country.

- On October 12, 2002, in the tourist district of Kuta on the Indonesian island of Bali, Islamic terrorists killed 202 people at the nightclub Paddy's Bar.
- On March 11, 2004, Al Qaeda was suspected in the Madrid train bombing attacks, which killed 191 and wounded 2,050.

- On July 7, 2005, London was hit by a coordinated attack of suicide bombers on the London Underground and a double-decker bus. 52 people were killed during these attacks.

President George W. Bush recognized the danger terrorists posed not only to the United States, but to the entire world, and adopted a preemptive strategy to fight terrorism across the globe.

After the 9/11 attacks, the United States awoke to the fact that terrorism was real and there was a need to take the fight to the enemy globally. The United States could no longer expect to end terrorism without fully engaging in a war to rid the world of terrorist activities. The United States has taken on the militant Islamists overseas to prevent further attacks upon American soil. The United States, along with its allies, has disrupted major terrorist plots around the world because of the preemptive strategy.

- In 2002, the U.S. interrupted a plot to attack targets on the West Coast of the United States using hijacked airplanes.
- In 2003, the U.S. and a partner disrupted a plot to attack Westerners at several targets in Karachi, Pakistan.
- In the summer of 2005, the United States and the United Kingdom successfully stopped a terrorist plot to blowup 10 passenger airline planes flying over the Atlantic headed to the United States.

Iraq represents a front for the Global War on Terror and losing control of the country would result in a major setback in fighting terrorism throughout the world. A defeat to the United States in Iraq would only embolden the terrorists and lead them to believe that America could be bullied by terrorist actions. Leaving Iraq would have dire consequences for the people of Iraq and for the security of every American citizen.

President Bush's Address to the Nation

On January 10, 2007, President George W. Bush addressed the nation regarding a new strategy for Iraq and outlined a new course of action for American forces. The President called the military conflict in Iraq "the decisive ideological struggle of our time."

In his speech, the President acknowledged that 2006 was a bloody and violent year for Iraq and the Iraqi people. President Bush also made it very clear that failure in Iraq would be disastrous, not just for Iraq, but for the United States and the entire region.

According to military data, 80 percent of the sectarian violence occurs within 30 miles of Baghdad. The President believes the efforts to secure Baghdad failed for 2 main reasons. First, there were not sufficient amounts of American and Iraqi troops to secure neighborhoods that had been cleared of terrorists and insurgents. After the American and Iraqi forces cleared a

neighborhood or area, the forces would move on to another area without leaving any troops behind to maintain the security. This allowed the terrorists and insurgents to regroup and rebuild in these cleared areas.

Second, the President believes that there were too many restrictions placed on our troops. Political and sectarian interference prevented American and Iraqi forces from entering certain neighborhoods that fueled the sectarian violence.

The new plan to secure Iraq will deal with alleviating these 2 problems.

The main elements of this new proposal:

- Require the Iraqi government to appoint a military commander and 2 deputy commanders for Baghdad; and,
- Require that the Iraqi government deploy Iraqi Army and National Police brigades to Baghdad's 9 districts.

With this additional support, Baghdad will be patrolled by 18 Iraqi Army and National Police brigades, along with local police. Also, American and Iraqi forces will no longer be restricted from entering neighborhoods because of political or sectarian interference.

The United States military commanders believe the Iraqi government will need our assistance to secure Iraq. The President has therefore committed over 20,000 additional troops to assist the Iraqi government, with the majority of the troops (5 brigades) deployed to Baghdad. 4,000 troops will be stationed in Anbar Province to help secure that area as well. The troop increase will allow American and Iraqi forces to maintain control of areas they have cleared of terrorists and insurgents. In accordance with the Iraq Study Group's recommendations, the United States will increase the embedding of American advisors in Iraqi Army units and partner a Coalition brigade with every Iraqi Army division.

The Iraqi government has set benchmarks for securing its nation. The benchmarks are listed below:

- The Iraqi government plans to take responsibility for security in all of Iraq's provinces by November of this year;
- The government will pass legislation to share oil revenues amongst its citizens;
- The government will spend \$10 billion of its own money on reconstruction and infrastructure projects that will also create jobs;
- The Iraqis plan to hold provincial elections later this year; and,

- The government will reform de-Baathification laws, and establish a fair process for considering amendments to Iraq's constitution.

President Bush has made it clear to Prime Minister Maliki that American support is not open-ended; the Iraqi government must follow through with their promises or the American people will stop supporting the efforts of the Iraqi government.

Additionally, the United States will use full diplomatic resources to gain support in the Middle East for Iraq. The president believes that Iraq's neighbors need to understand that a defeat in Iraq would create a new sanctuary for terrorists and would certainly affect their own way of life.

The President concluded that establishing a democratically elected government in Iraq would protect the American people and our allies in the region

Actions of the 110th Congress

Senate Action

On February 1, 2007, the Senate began debate on S. 470- *A bill to express the sense of Congress on Iraq*. This bill was introduced by Senator Carl Levin (D-MI) on January 31, 2007.

The bill expressed that it was the sense of the Senate that the Senate "disagrees with the 'plan' to augment our forces by 21,500, and urges the President instead to consider all options and alternatives for achieving the strategic goals."

The Senate voted on a cloture motion to proceed with S. 470 on February 5, 2007. The cloture motion was not invoked by a recorded vote of 49-47 ([Record Vote Number: 44](#)).

Senate Republicans objected because they insisted on receiving a vote on Senator Judd Gregg's resolution, which promised to continue the funding of troops in Iraq.

Note: A cloture vote is a parliamentary procedure to stop debate on the bill being considered and requires 60 votes for passage.

H.R. 511

Representative Sam Johnson (R-TX) introduced H.R. 511 - *To pledge the faithful support of Congress to members of the United States Armed Forces serving in harm's way*. The bill states that "Congress will not cut off or restrict funding for units and members of the Armed Forces that the Commander in Chief has deployed in harm's way in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom."

H.R. 511 was referred to the House Committee on Armed Services but no action has been taken by the Committee.

Republican Leader Boehner's letter to Speaker Pelosi

Republican Leader John Boehner sent a letter to Speaker Nancy Pelosi on January 22, 2007, regarding the President's new strategy for Iraq.

In the letter, Leader Boehner requested the creation of a bipartisan select committee to oversee the new strategy in Iraq. The bipartisan select committee would consist of an equal number of Republicans and Democrats and would be chaired by a Member of the Majority party.

The letter refers to a set of benchmarks established by House Republicans to ensure the new strategy in Iraq is working. (See Additional Information)

The bipartisan select committee would receive reports every 30 days from the President on the progress in Iraq towards fulfilling the benchmarks.

Actions of the 109th Congress

H.Res. 571

On November 18, 2005, the House of Representatives considered H.Res. 571 - *Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the deployment of United States forces in Iraq be terminated immediately*. The resolution called for the deployment of United States forces in Iraq to be terminated immediately and the resolution failed by a recorded vote of 3-403 ([Roll no. 608](#)).

	AYES	NOES	PRES	NV
REPUBLICAN		215		16
DEMOCRATIC	3	187	6	6
INDEPENDENT		1		
TOTALS	3	403	6	22

The bill was introduced by Representative Duncan Hunter (R-CA) on November 18, 2005. The resolution was brought to the floor in response to Representative John Murtha's (D-PA) comment that American troops should be redeployed immediately from Iraq.

H.Res. 861

On June 16, 2006, the House of Representatives considered H.Res. 861 - *Declaring that the United States will prevail in the Global War on Terror, the struggle to protect freedom from the terrorist adversary*. Among other things, the resolution declared that the “United States is committed to the completion of the mission to create a sovereign, free, secure, and united Iraq.” The resolution was agreed to by a recorded vote of 256-153 ([Roll no. 228](#)).

	Yeas	Nays	PRES	NV
Republican	214	3	2	12
Democratic	42	149	3	7
Independent		1		
TOTALS	256	153	5	19

The bill was introduced by Representative Henry Hyde (R-IL) on June 12, 2006.

Authorization for Use of Military Force in the 107th Congress

On October 10, 2002, the House of Representatives considered H.J.Res. 114 – *Authorization for use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002*. The bill passed by a recorded vote of 296-133 ([Roll no. 455](#)).

	Yeas	Nays	PRES	NV
Republican	215	6		2
Democratic	81	126		1
Independent		1		
TOTALS	296	133		3

The Senate moved on H.J.Res. 114 on October 11, 2002 and the bill passed the Senate by a recorded vote of 77-23 ([Record vote number: 237](#)).

The President signed H.J.Res. 114 into law on October 16, 2002 (Public Law 107-243).

H.J.Res. 114 authorized the President to use the Armed Forces of the United States as he determines to be necessary and appropriate in order to:

- Defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq; and,
- Enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq.

This bill stipulated that military force was only acceptable if diplomatic or other peaceful means would not adequately protect the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq or if enforcement of all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq were not likely to be enforceable.

Additional Information

[President's Address to the Nation on January 10, 2007](#)

[Fact Sheet: The New Way Forward in Iraq](#) – From the Office of the President

[Iraq Study Group](#)

[Republican Benchmarks Set Forth by Leader John Boehner](#)

[Letter from Ayman al-Zawahiri to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in Iraq](#) - dated 07/09/2005 and declassified on 10/11/2005

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